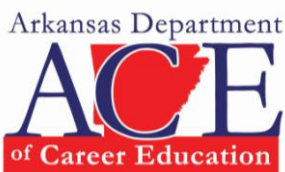


MALVERN COMMUNITY HIRING EVENT

Sykes Enterprises is an international customer support company that has a branch in Malvern. They have other branches in Morrilton, Conway and Fort Smith. Sykes began operation in Malvern two years ago by offering 200 jobs to the area of Hot Spring, Garland, Clark and Saline counties. They are now offering the area 400 additional new jobs. On Saturday, March 31, Sykes sponsored a "Malvern Community -Wide Hiring Event". About 25 local businesses participated, along with representatives from the College of the Ouachitas and Ouachita Area Adult Education Center. From the event Sykes was able to find 136 perspective employees on site.

Below: College of the Ouachitas staff members at Sykes hiring event.



The Arkansas Department of Career Education funds the Adult Education Division. The Adult Education Division provides programs and services statewide.

COABE Conference Held

This year's COABE (Commission on Adult Basic Education) conference was held in Norfolk, Virginia, April 9-13, 2012. Several individuals from Arkansas attended the conference and had the opportunity to attend pre-conference workshops. Approximately 200 concurrent workshops from local and national classroom and administrative leaders in a variety of focus areas/strands were offered. The conference theme "Changing our Latitudes, Changing our Attitudes" focused not only on the continuous changes that adult education faces, but also on how our attitudes toward these changes can have a positive influence on our students, programs, and communities.

An impressive lineup of keynote speakers included noted historian and author John Quarstein who amazed the audience with interesting facts about the history of the Norfolk area. Jon Gordon, author of the bestselling book *The Energy Bus* challenged the group with the ingredients to promote highly-functioning individuals and teams. Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, OVAE Assistant Secretary from the U. S. Department of Education, gave an informative presentation on federal-level news and policy updates.

The GED Testing Service® shared information on the current progress and continuing implementation of offering the GED® test on a computer-based platform and the new assessment system being released in 2014. Discussion included several facets of the new assessment system development including test-taker preparation and instruction.



Representatives from Arkansas attending the national COABE conference.

The Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE)

WAGE is a job-readiness training program developed, produced, and conducted by the Adult Education Division of the Arkansas Department of Career Education. It includes 112 competencies determined by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) to be essential to employers. WAGE offers five state-issued certificates (Industrial, Clerical, Employability, Bank Teller, and Customer Service), all of which carry the Secretary of State's signature. Out of 3 million adults in Arkansas 18 and older, more than 13 percent (400,000) are judged to function below 12th grade level. Arkansas also has a large high school dropout rate. These adults lack adequate basic literacy skills and are WAGE's target population. Testing, which was a 33-page paper test for some 18 years, is now completely web-based. Questions can be customized to meet employers' specific needs.

WAGE began in 1992 with a partnership between the Adult Education System and L'Oreal (formerly Maybelline). Built on that foundation, WAGE grew over the years to its current level of operations, programs in 20 of Arkansas' 51 adult education centers. It is funded with state tax dollars and totally driven by the needs of business and industry. Some businesses in the state now require an applicant to have a WAGE certificate to be eligible for hire at all.

Excerpt from the [Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy](#) publication, "Random Acts of Progress – Certification of Readiness for Jobs and College"

Ways to Prepare for the 2014 GED® Test Transition

In December 2013 the current GED® test series will end, and learners have to pass all five sections of the current test by that date or start all over again. A shift from paper-based testing to computer-based platform will happen at the same time.

There are lots of ideas and pieces of advice to use right now in preparing for the transition.

- Those who are well on their way to being ready may be ready to test before the deadline. Learners in pre-GED courses may not have enough time to obtain the knowledge they need to pass the current test. Encourage them to concentrate on learning and not be concerned with the current test.
- Suggest or write stories for your local newspaper. Small newspapers are often hungry for news. Larger operations will probably want to write the stories themselves but will appreciate the ideas and leads.
- Send out postcards or letters as reminders to those who have not successfully completed the testing process.
- Use Facebook or other social media outlets to contact learners. Put a countdown clock on your center's website or Facebook page.
- Offer extra testing sessions on weekends or nights.

Spotlight on Arkansas Literacy Councils, Inc. (ALC)

River Valley Literacy Council (Yell County) Ava Partridge, Volunteer Tutor

"I have been a volunteer tutor for about twenty years. I continue to tutor for several reasons. First, I enjoy it because it is extremely rewarding to see a student's progress. A tutor can observe progress in many areas of a student's life, but I think the most rewarding aspect is to see a person's self-esteem rise as he/she improves his/her English proficiency and reading abilities. I have seen this in my current students as they have progressed to the point that they can take the GED® test with confidence. Second, I have enjoyed seeing three students obtain their U. S. citizenship. Attending their citizenship ceremonies in Little Rock was inspiring. Last of all, I enjoy the friendships I have made while tutoring. I have met people from different cultures and backgrounds, and these people have enriched my life."



For more information on ALC visit arkansasliteracy.org or call 800-264-7323

CALENDAR ITEMS

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|------------------|--|
| <i>MAY 1-4</i> | <i>ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF CAREER EDUCATION
SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM RETREAT
(EMBASSY SUITES/BENTONVILLE)</i> |
| <i>MAY 8</i> | <i>TOP 25 GED® SCORERS' RECOGNITION CEREMONY
(OLD SUPREME COURTROOM/STATE CAPITOL BUILDING, 10 A.M.)</i> |
| <i>MAY 8-9</i> | <i>ADULT EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS' MEETING
(AALRC/LITTLE ROCK)</i> |
| <i>MAY 14</i> | <i>2014 GED® TASK FORCE MEETING
(AALRC/LITTLE ROCK)</i> |
| <i>MAY 24-25</i> | <i>ADULT EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
(NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE)</i> |
| <i>MAY 24-25</i> | <i>WAGE™ RETREAT
(MT. MAGAZINE)</i> |

